

A NEW APIOCERA FROM SOUTH AFRICA.*

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The family Apioceridæ is small. About a dozen species are known the world over, and of these about one-half are from North America. According to a recent catalogue of African diptera,** by Professor Mario Bezzi, no African species of this group has been described. Apioceridæ live in the arid plains of the Western States, but, with the exception of *Apiocera haruspex* Osten Sacken, they are quite rare.

In a most interesting collection of Diptera received from Dr. Hans Brauns of Willowmor, Cape Colony, I find a beautiful species of this archaic group. It gives me much pleasure to dedicate the species to this observant entomologist. The collections sent by Dr. Brauns seem remarkable to the American collector, although the forms, he states, are the commoner ones of his locality. A preponderance of the specimens belong to the Asilidæ. Several different Mydaidæ, numerous Tabanidæ, especially Pangonias, curious Bombyliidæ, Cyrtidæ, and Conopids, all bespeak the dry and arid character of the high steppes of the Cape. In one letter written in late April, Dr. Brauns stated that it had not rained since the September previous. Accordingly, there is a dearth of the moisture-loving diptera, such as Leptidæ, Dolichopodidæ, Empididæ, Tipulidæ, etc. To many of us it may seem strange to recall that the collecting season of the entomologist of the antipodes is confined to our winter months.

*Contributions from the Zoological laboratory of the State College of Washington, Pullman, Washington.

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Apiocera braunsi sp. nov. Plate 1.

Male. Length of body 18 mm., length of wing 9.5 mm. A black species ornate with white pollen and pubescence. Head very small. Front broad, white pollinose, but with a broad mesial vitta piceous. This vitta is suddenly narrowed just above the antennæ. The very sparse pile of the front corresponds in color to its basement, except that there is an irregular row of blackish hairs along the margin of the eye at the vertex. Anterior ocellus crescentic, light-colored, the posterior pair small, situated on the borders of the median vitta. Face short, fuscous, bare; genæ with a narrow white-pollinose stripe separating the eyes from an elongate velvet-black macula. Upper part of the flattened occiput blackened except at the margin of the eyes, where it is white pollinose like the lower portion; upper portion of the occiput with numerous black bristly hairs; the dense beard white.

The securiform palpi testaceous, white pollinose, and provided with sparse black hairs above. Proboscis short, piceous, loosely provided with dusky pubescence below, and with a bunch of white hairs behind. Antennæ short, black, the second joint smaller than the first, the upper and outer sides of the globose third joint dull fuscous; the first two joints provided with black bristles above, the first joint with long white hairs below.

Thorax short, mesonotum blackish, provided with brownish pollen, except on four equidistant broad white-pollinose vittæ, the middle pair of white vittæ are abbreviated on the last fourth of the dorsum, the outer pair begin on the humeri and extend back to include the white pollinose scutellum, pleuræ entirely white pollinose. Pronotum white pubescent and with a collar of short black bristles, mesonotum loosely provided with dusky hairs, pleuræ bare, prosternum with bushy white pubescence. All the bristles of the thorax comparatively short, black; humeri with four or five bristles; the outermost black vittæ with black hairs and about six bristles; about four supra-alar bristles present; post-alar callus with three longer bristles; a single pair of pre-scutellar bristles present; scutellum with six marginals.

Abdomen long, black, subshining, especially posteriorly, white fasciate on the hind border of the first six segments, the white border excised in the middle in front on the first and second segments, and on the third and fourth segments it becomes attenuated at the sides, the fifth, sixth, and seventh segments white pollinose at the base, on the sixth segment the black ground color is obliterated except on the



APIOCERA BRAUNSI MELANDER.

sides, venter loosely white pollinose. Hairs of the abdomen black, short, and sparse, the first four ventrals with longer white pubescence.

Hypopygium large, terminal, valvate, black, shining, and more densely black hairy than the rest of the body; the upper valves slightly shorter than the lower, the hairs becoming longer at their apex, the middle of the upper side bowed out so as to accommodate a pair of short black filaments; lower valves tipped with a dense fascicle of pure white, flattened hairs.

Ground color of legs black, becoming reddish apically. Coxæ closely white pollinose; front coxæ white pubescent and with a few white bristles beneath; middle and hind coxæ with straggling white hairs, and each with a lateral vertical row of three black bristles as well as with an apical fringe beneath. Femora more loosely pollinose, all the femora with a row of about six black bristles along the outer lower edge, front femora with a similar row of longer bristles along the upper edge. Tibiæ and tarsi subshining, more closely black bristly, the bristles of the hind tarsi long, pulvilli small.

Wings small, clear hyaline, veins narrow, blackish; neuration normal, second submarginal cell four times as long as broad, fourth posterior cell narrowly sessile with the second basal. Halteres destroyed.

Described from a single male taken by Dr. Hans Brauns, January 1, 1905, at Willowmore, Cape Colony, South Africa.